

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus of a folder device for use in conjunction with a mail sorting device, said apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements supported upon a frame, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, a plurality of compartments into which items are placed in a generally upright manner, each of said plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements, and a support structure for engaging the items bottom; and

a folder device for receiving items and being generally vertically supported upon the support structure bottom, said folder device having a ~~first side connected to a second side~~ pair of sides, each side of the folder being associated with one of the partition elements, each side of the folder having a forward edge, wherein the forward edges of the first and second sides are differently configured forward edges of the sides are at different heights relative to the leading edges of the associated partition elements, and wherein the edge of the first side is configured in relation to the leading edge of its associated partition element so that at least a portion of the first side does not extend vertically past the leading edge, and wherein at least a portion of the second side does not extend vertically past the leading edge of its associated partition element.

2. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the support structure of the sorting device bottom is movable relative to the frame between has a first orientation and a second orientation, in the first orientation the support structure supports the items in a generally upright manner, and in the second orientation with the support structure and plurality of partition elements displaced further away from each other the support structure supports the items in a generally horizontal manner.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes addressee indicia on a surface thereof.

4. (original) The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the folder device is a postage paid mail item.

5. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes a splay structure tending to force the folder device into an open configuration when the folder is placed between the partitions of the sorting device.

6. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the folder device includes a generally planar bottom which engages the ~~support structure~~bottom of the sorting device in the ~~first orientation~~.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus of a ~~folder device for use in conjunction with a mail sorting device~~, said apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements supported upon a frame, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, a plurality of compartments into which items are placed in a generally upright manner, each of said plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements, and a ~~support structure~~bottom for ~~engaging~~supporting the items; and

a folder device for receiving items, said folder device being generally vertically supported by the support structure bottom between a pair of adjacent partition elements, said folder device having a first side connected to a second side pair of sides, each side of the folder being associated with one of the partition elements, and each side of the folder having a leading forward edge, wherein the leading forward edges of the first and second sides are differently configured so that one of the forward edges extends to a greater height above the leading edges of the partition elements than the other, and wherein the leading edge of the first side is configured in relation to the leading edge of its associated partition element so that at least a portion of the first side does not extend vertically past the leading edge, and wherein at least a portion of the second side does not extend vertically past the leading edge of its associated partition element.

8. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the support structure bottom of the sorting device has a first orientation and a second orientation, in the first orientation the support structure bottom supports the items in a generally upright manner, and in the second orientation with the support structure and plurality of partition elements displaced further away from each other the support structure supports the items in a generally horizontal manner.

9. (original) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes addressee indicia on a surface thereof.

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the folder device is a postage paid mail item.

11. (previously amended) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes a splay structure tending to maintain the folder device in an open configuration when the folder is placed between the partitions of the sorting device.

12. (original) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the folder device includes a generally planar bottom which engages the support structure in the first orientation.

13. (currently amended) A method of creating a delivery point package, said method comprising the steps of:

sorting a plurality of mail items into mail item subgroupings, each subgrouping including similar destination indicia;

providing a plurality of invertable folder devices each having a pair of sides and defining at least a pair of orientations, including a first orientation wherein the sides are generally coextensive with each other;

placing with each subgrouping a folder device in a first orientation, whereby each subgrouping has an associated folder device;

accessing a particular subgrouping of mail items and an associated folder device; and inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items between the sides of the inverted folder device to define a delivery point package.

14. (original) A method of claim 13, wherein at least one of the plurality of invertable folder device has addressee indicia disposed upon a surface thereof.

15. (original) A method of claim 14, wherein the step of placing a folder device between each subgrouping includes the step of referencing the addressee indicia of the folder device.

16. (original) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

17. (original) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via an automated process.

18. (currently amended) A method of creating a delivery point package, said method comprising the steps of:

sorting a plurality of postage paid mail items into mail item subgroupings, each subgrouping including similar destination indicia, said postage paid mail items including a plurality of flat invertible folder devices each having a unique destination indicia, each folder device having a pair of sides and defining at least a pair of orientations, including a first orientation wherein the sides are generally coextensive with each other;

accessing a subgrouping of mail items and an associated folder device having similar destination indicia; and

inverting the associated folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items between the sides of the inverted folder device to define a delivery point package.

19. (original) A method of claim 18, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

20. (original) A method of claim 18, wherein the step of inverting the folder device to capture the subgrouping of mail items is achieved via an automated process.

21. (previously amended) A method of creating delivery point packages for mail delivery, said method comprising the steps of:

sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category according to a unique destination indicia;

associating a folder device with each unique destination indicia;

inverting each folder device to capture mail items associated with a unique destination indicia between sides of the inverted folder device;

placing the inverted folder devices into a sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;

inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category into the inverted folder devices in the sorting device according to unique destination indicia; and

removing the inverted folder devices having mail items of the first and second category to define a delivery point package.

22. (original) A method of claim 21, wherein at least one of the plurality of invertable folder device has addressee indicia disposed upon a surface thereof.

23. (original) A method of claim 21, wherein the step of sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category is via an automated sorting process, and wherein the process of inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category is a manual process.

24. (original) A method of claim 21, wherein the step of inverting each folder device to capture associated mail items is achieved via manual manipulation of the folder device.

25. (original) A method of claim 21, wherein the mail items of a first category include USPS designated flats, and wherein the mail items of a second category include USPS designated non-flats.

26. (previously amended) A method of creating a delivery point package containing a plurality of different categories of mail items, said method comprising the steps of:

sorting a plurality of mail items of a first category according to a unique destination indicia, said mail items including a plurality of invertable folder devices, each folder device having a pair of sides;

inverting the folder devices to capture mail items having a unique destination indicia between the pair of sides;

placing the inverted folder devices into a sorting device having a plurality of partition elements;

inserting a plurality of mail items of a second category into the inverted folder devices in the sorting device according to unique destination indicia; and

removing the inverted folder devices having mail items of the first and second category to define a delivery point package.

27. (previously presented) A method of claim 13, wherein the step of placing the folder devices with the subgroupings is achieved by placing the folder device as a divider between a pair of adjacent subgroupings.

28. (new) An apparatus comprising:

a mail sorting device having a plurality of partition elements, each of the partition elements having a configured leading edge, and a plurality of compartments being at least partially defined between a pair of partition elements; and
a folder device placed within a compartment for receiving items, said folder device having a pair of sides, each side being associated with one of the partition elements, wherein one of the sides has a reveal structure so that the other side extends to a greater extent above the leading edge of its associated partition element.

29. (new) An apparatus of claim 28, wherein the configured leading edge is downwardly tapered and the side reveal structure defines a downwardly tapering side shape.